

1. An apparatus for treating water comprising, an MF or UF membrane filter and a reverse osmosis unit wherein water to be treated is fed into the MF or UF membrane filter, permeate from the membrane filter is fed to the reverse osmosis unit and spacers in the reverse osmosis unit are thinner than spacers appropriate for use in a reverse osmosis unit which is fed directly with the water to be treated.

2. An apparatus for treating water having an MF or UF membrane filter providing pretreatment of feed water for a downstream reverse osmosis unit wherein the reverse osmosis unit has spacers between 15 and 25 mil (381 and 635 microns) thick.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the spacers are between 17 and 22 mil (431.8 and 558.8 microns) thick.

4. The apparatus of any of claims 1 to 3 wherein the MF or UF membrane filter is a suction driven immersed membrane filter.

5. The apparatus of any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the reverse osmosis unit is a spiral wound module.

6. The apparatus of any of claims 1 to 5 used to desalinate salt water.

7. The apparatus of any of claims 1 to 5 wherein the feed water is salt water.